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PRESS RELEASE

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FRANCESCO CLEMENTE: INDIA Through November 12, 1989

A dizzying mix of images and sources--Eastern and Western, ancient and modern, personal and universal--are forged into the unique style of painter Francesco Clemente (b. 1952, Naples). Tom Hinson, the Museum's curator of contemporary art, has concentrated on the prolific artist's influences from India in selecting an exhibition of five multiple-part works, on view in Gallery 40 through November 12, 1989.

A self-taught artist who began to paint at the age of eight, Clemente is a distinguished draftsman, particularly noted for his pastels. He created four of the works during the spring of 1979 in Pondicherry, on the eastern coast of India. The intimate scale of the individually matted component works in pastel, gouache, charcoal, graphite, and ink, invites viewers close to peruse each one then back away to take in the whole group. His subjects, among them a dragonfly, a self-portrait, a ceiling fan, an egg and a dismembered hand, relate like fragments of a dream that leaves a sense of unease.

Story of My Country, completed just this year, is made of eighteen works in gouache on silk. Clemente commissioned Indian artists who are trained in traditional miniature painting to render animal and plant motifs and human figures in compositions rich with references to Hindu mythology and to universal ideas of creation, life, and death.

Clemente and his family divide their time between Rome, Madras, and New York. His works are on loan from the Anthony d'Offay Gallery, London.

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